

McGregor W. Scott

United States Attorney
Eastern District of California

Sacramento 501 I. Street, Ste 10-100 Sacramento CA 95814 Tel (916) 554-2700 TTY (916) 554-2855 **NEWS RELEASE**

Fresno 2500 Tulare St., Suite 4401 Fresno, CA 93721 Tel (559) 497-4000 TTY (559) 497-4500

Contact: Rosemary Shaul (916) 554-2802

http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/cae/

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 7, 2007

FORMER CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS AND REHABILITATION VOCATIONAL COUNSELOR SENTENCED TO FEDERAL PRISON FOR POSSESSING CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

SACRAMENTO--United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that STEVEN RALPH RUSSELL, 58, of Sacramento, was sentenced today by United States District Judge David F. Levi, to 40 months in federal prison. The defendant, formerly a vocational counselor for the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, was convicted of possessing child pornography between February and March 2006.

This case is the product of an extensive/joint investigation by the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation and the High Tech Task Force, a federal, state, and local task force which focuses on the investigation and prosecution of computer crimes. This investigation was undertaken as part of Project Safe Childhood (PSC). PSC is a United States Department of Justice initiative established to increase federal prosecutions of violent sexual predators of children, and to reduce the number of Internet crimes against children including child pornography trafficking. As a part of PSC, the United States Attorney's Office has teamed with state and local agencies and organizations to increase law enforcement presence on the Internet, and to educate the public about safe Internet use, thereby reducing the risk that children might fall prey to online sexual predators. For additional information on the PSC initiative, please go to www.projectsafechildhood.gov or call the United States Attorney's Office for the Eastern

District of California and ask to speak with the PSC coordinator.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Carolyn K. Delaney, who prosecuted the case, Judge Levi, in sentencing the defendant, said that he considered the severity of the defendant's offense along with the fact that the defendant is a first-time offender. The defendant was immediately remanded to begin serving his sentence.

###